

Amendments to the Drawings:

As suggested by the Examiner, new figures (FIGS. 4-10) have been added depicting the claimed methods. No new matter has been added.

Remarks/Arguments

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 3-7, 12, 14 and 20 contained allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By way of the present amendment, Applicants have amended the specification to add text referencing new figures, FIGS. 4-10, as suggested by the Examiner. No new matter has been introduced by way of these amendments. Further, Applicants have also amended Claims 1, 13 and 20; canceled Claims 12 and 14; and added Claims 21-35. Thirty-three (33) claims remain pending in the application: Claims 1-11, 13 and 15-35, of which Claims 1, 13, 20, 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34 are independent. Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims, in view of the amendments above and comments below.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 2, 8-11, 13 and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious (unpatentable) over Stecker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,915,166).

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter found in original Claim 12, which claim have been canceled. Likewise, Independent Claim 13 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter found in original Claim 14, which claim have been canceled. Claim 20 has been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim. Because the allowable subject matter from original Claims 12, 14 and 20 is now found in amended Claims 1, 13 and 20, it is submitted that Claims 1, 13 and 20, and those claims that depend therefrom, should be patentable for, *inter alia*, at least the same reasons that original claims 12, 14 and 20 were found by the Examiner to contain allowable subject matter.

Newly Added Claims

By way of the present amendment, fifteen (15) new claims have been added. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

- New Claims 21-25 depend from Claim 20. Claim 20 includes, *inter alia*, allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner.
- New Independent Claim 26 includes, the subject matter from original Claim 1 and the allowable subject matter from original Claim 3.
- New Claim 27 depends from Claim 26.
- New Independent Claim 28 includes, the subject matter from original Claim 1 and the allowable subject matter from original Claim 4.
- New Claim 29 depends from Claim 28.
- New Independent Claim 30 includes, the subject matter from original Claim 1, and the allowable subject matter from original Claims 4 and 5.
- New Claim 31 depends from Claim 30.
- New Independent Claim 32 includes, the subject matter from original Claim 1, and the allowable subject matter from original Claims 4 and 6.
- New Claim 33 depends from Claim 32.
- New Independent Claim 34 includes, the subject matter from original Claim 1, and the allowable subject matter from original Claim 7.
- New Claim 35 depends from Claim 34.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections have been overcome and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. An indication of allowability of Claims 1-11, 13 and 15-35 at an early date is thus earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Victoria A. Poissant, should any issues remain after consideration and entry of this response, in order to permit early resolution of such issues.

Respectfully Submitted,

April 10, 2007

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attachments: New drawings (FIGS. 4-10)

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